Narrator: Heber Guthrie
Interviewer: Anna Marie Switzer
Date: July 18, 2024
Project: Down East Change

Anna Marie Switzer 00:00
Okay. So hi, my name is Anna Marie Switzer, and I'm here with the Core Sound Museum working on our potential museum exhibit. And then I'll have you say your name.

Heber Guthrie 00:11
My name is Heber McKay Guthrie.

Anna Marie Switzer 00:15
Perfect, yeah. Okay, let's get started. Okay, so can you tell me a little bit about where you were born and where you grew up?

Heber Guthrie 00:26
Well, I was born in Morehead City to the hospital in Morehead City, my sibling, my brother, sister, and so forth. They were born here in Harkers Island, where, back in the day, they had what I call a midwife, you know. But anyway, I was going to Morehead City in 1951, February the 25th, so I grew up here on Harkers Island. My childhood, and 1957 I believe, was they moved the-- they had a new elementary school built here. And so, the next year, we were the first grade, was in the first grade. So, we were the first group who went the first eight years to school here. So, I went to school here to all throughout elementary school. My father and brother and uncle, they were always boat builders. And so, I kind of couldn't escape it. That's mostly what was discussed around the dinner table was, you know, boats and fishing and that sort of thing. And so, I just grew up in it. My brother went out on his own, became his own boat building company in about '67 and at the time we had a, we had a program at East Carteret High School. It was called DE, [indistinct] education, and what you could do is you could leave school if you had a job, you could leave school at last time and go to work. So, I did that work my brother. So, then I got more hands on, you know, every day, than what I was getting before. I was always interested in draftsman, drawing. I wanted to learn. What I really wanted to be a naval architect, but I just didn't have the mathematical skill to do that. But anyway, I will always want to do that. And of course, he could, he could do it really good. And so, I was married in 1969, grew up my wife, we met in high school, and we lived, we moved over in Gloucester, where I live now. In 1973 and we had two kids, and they all went to Smyrna Elementary School, which is not far away right here from here, and they all graduated from East Carteret, but we all went to basically the same school. In '72 I quit working with my brother, and I got a job to Cherry Point to the Marine Corps Station. And when I went there, it was hard, through what was called the NA gap, naval art depot, what it was called.

Anna Marie Switzer 03:16
What was that called? How do you spell that? What is a reduction in force?

Heber Guthrie 03:18

I think they called it NA gap. Is it? Naval depot? Naval I depot? Something that might be changed now. So anyway, I started as a painter. And, you know, my uncle said, do anything to get your foot in the door. So, you know, so I did and, and turns out it was spray painting engine parts. And I kind of liked it, but it weren't, you know, quite what I went to do. So, in '73 and next year, the co-op had a reduction in force. And of course, I was a young man, you know, young, and the totem pole I got, you know, was going to be shipped back, not, not barred, but, you know, sent to another location. It's when, like, they have too many employees, it happens that they try to place you so, you know, you don't lose your job. Kind of going. I have a career condition anyway, not by being temporary. It might, might have been a different thing. But it turned out I went to, they called it public works then, and which was still under, that was under the Navy Department, not facility maintenance or Marine Corps. And so, then I was in a barber shop. You know that now, I'm now, I'm home now. I'm where I want to be, you know? And so, I worked there from '73 to about had to be about '84 I got a chance to move over in what we call it was Operations Division, and that's where you had your plan estimators. You know, we had a, we had a colonel was over us, of course. Then he had a colonel, and then you had the, you had the general, you know, there. And so anyway, before that, our line work was in maintenance. We've maintained, we had a, we had a base, we had government housing. We had ulcers. Housing, we had some of NA gap right back where I worked from. They didn't have the personnel to do their maintenance, so we did it. You know, for them, we had what called outlying fields. We had the bombing range BT 11 and BT 9. We had Oak Grove. We had boat.

Anna Marie Switzer 05:41
Just double checking. Sorry.

Heber Guthrie 05:42
We had a boat field, so I got to move around a lot. We just weren't in that one place every day. So, I've gotten to see a lot more, meet a lot more people. And, you know, it didn't make it. And so, like I said, in '84 I got into the operations part of it, and became a building inspector. Then it was a plan estimator. And now I'm writing work for others to do, you know. And then later on, in the late ’90s, we became spec writer, which, you know, specifications, though I still, I still hung onto the boat building. I did boat building on the side, you know, after hours. And I built, probably, I would probably be maybe three a year, you know, like 20-foot style boats, work boats, and that that was pretty good, you know, being you had a labor job, and try to do that too. And I watch me, I feel like I'm beating this horse or death right now.

Anna Marie Switzer 06:49
No, this is wonderful.

Heber Guthrie 06:51
So anyway, my kids wrote up, you know, they graduated, and they went off to—my son went to, he, he went, he got into N.C. State College, but he did a lot of it. He went to the New Bern, Craven Community College. First got an associate's degree, and then he transferred over to State College, and finally he got his degree, engineering degree. My daughter, she started out here with the with the ledger co-op here on Harkers Island, and then they merged with the main office. I forget what year it was. She's with that company now. When I retired in 2008, I wanted to get back into more boat building, you know, full time. So, my brother, he was still living then. He's 16 years older, and he said he was, you know, he was, he was about ready to get out of it. And I just wanted him to

hang on to it a little bit longer, you know, because I wanted… I had, didn't have a chance to work with them earlier on, so I got chance to do that. And by now, we're building what we call cold mold boats. They're not built on a keel, like traditionally. They don't have frames in. They're built upside down. They've got jigs in. You cover them with plywood. And actually, the boats are almost built backwards. You do the bottom first and then massage out. So, we, I got involved in that, and we built probably about four boats. So, then I kind of got out on my own that will be doing stuff for myself. And in 2010, the elementary school principal asked me to participate. They had a heritage, can't think of it. Anyways, in the spring, they're one of their whole schools about heritage. And she knew, she's named Miss Lilley, April Lilley. And she knew I was in boat building, so she decided, can you, can you come out here to boat in the school? So I said, Well, yeah, why not? You know, you've got classroom, you've got electricity, and, you know. So, we decided what was going to build, and the whole—actually, I'm not sure if kindergarten took part—but I know from the first grade through the eighth did something in that boat. And it was pretty neat. They were rotating kids in couple hours, you know, and they just move them in.

And they had a way they, they had a camera in there, and we could talk to other schools, and they could talk to us as we were building a boat, because they had a lot of questions, you know, why you do this, and what's asked for, and how'd you know how to cut that? And so, we did that, and we got a boat built in May, and I think they raffled it off, so they raised a little bit of money on it, and so that, that was pretty neat. And then the next year, I think we did one to the middle school to Smyrna. And so anyway, I did, I did a lot of that stuff. Uh. For the, during the school time. Here, our festival we have every year, the Core Sound Waterfowl Museum, the festival we have in December. I, we built about, I think about 12 skiers that we built over that weekend, and we will raffle them boats off. I do build my own boats. I'm in the one right now, the—my brother Bill, in 1974 that's 50 years ago, the boats to Wilmington. She was at Wrightsville Beach. And the owner, which is the son of the original owner. He got that whim, and he wanted to be on a model of that particular boat. She's 42 foot. So, I've got that. That's on the table right now, so to speak. So, I like to do that, the middle school the past maybe five years, not probably six years. I go out to the last semester. And it's sort of a carpenter class, but we build boats, we build bird houses. We've built, I think, four full size boats, you know, so the kids can see, rather than a model this, you know, it's here. Let's do what it do, full size of it. So, I've been doing that by the past five years, to the, to the middle school. 2019, I got a job out with the ferries here on, the express ferries. They run out of Harkers Island, they go to Cape Lookout.

And so, I got a job with them. And what I do out there, I do tours. They have a shuttle, a beach shuttle. And so, what we do, we take folks out to Cape Point, that's as far as you can drive, you know, safe, and drop them off and end up bringing them back. So I started that 2019. Well, 2020 my wife was diagnosed with lung cancer, so she died in March of 2020, and so, you know, I said, Well, what am I going to do now. You know how you, so anyway, so my bossman, then, "Hey, you want to come back to work?" Yep, sure do. So, this has been six years. I've been out with the with the ferry, and I learn a lot about the ocean. I love Cape Point. I love to watch sand move, and it does it every day. Right now, we're sitting here. He's doing something out there, something different going on all the time. I enjoy birds. I used to hunt birds, and I started carving birds, and when I started carving birds, I stopped hunting birds. We'll have a lot of variety birds out to the Cape. And it's a cycle, you know, every year they come in the spring, they leave, they come next spring. So that's just the way, just the way it is out there to the Cape. I enjoy that job almost two years ago, I mentioned earlier about the uniform, it's been two years ago, uh, good friend of mine out there, Glenn Eagle was a volunteer with the Park Service a long time.

And I mentioned one day, I said, “Wouldn't it be nice if somebody was dressed up like a lighthouse keeper and can meet people coming here every day.” He said, “Well, they got uniforms right here to the building.” I said, “why?” He said, “Yeah, on your way home, go in there.” And the guy was named Nate. He was over the volunteers, and so I went into Nate, said “I understand you got some uniform.” He said, “they're right around the closet. Look them over.” Well, I was worried about a coat fitting up, because it's a dark, it's a navy blue suit, but, you know, still wearing a mask. Well, the third, the second one I tried on, the coat was a perfect fit. Pants was a perfect fit. And turns out that the owner of that was Richard Meissner. He lived in Harkers Island years ago. He was a volunteer, and he left that suit. So it fitted him, and it fitted me. I thought that pretty neat. And anyway, he moved away, and so I've been using that ever since, go out to the Cape a lot of times, spend some time in the keeper's quarters, you know, talking to people, been doing a lot of school trips through the school year with the uniform. Uh, Karen, Chris and myself been as far as Goldsboro talking to students about lighthouses and different things we do down here. So that's been, uh, that's been real interesting.

You'll be surprised how many kids that live are locally here, but they know that very little about the lighthouse, other than it's there, got black and white diamonds. That's about the extent that they know. But a lot of history out there, you know, over the, over the years, well over 165 years old this year. So that's a long time. And so, I've been doing that, and I, here we are, July 2024. I mean, time marches on. Yeah, look back. You say, What happened? Well, it's day by day, hour by hour. It gets by. And I think next week we've got some trips with the museums going out, Monday Tuesday. That'll be, that'll be good, think it's a teacher group, teachers coming in. Yeah, we had some in June about this. I think it's a different group. And we get to talk about lighthouse and, you know, go to different places over there, and lot of stories, World War Two, lot of activity over there during the war. Of course, we're so close to the to the gulf stream. So anyway, pretty neat, pretty neat stuff happening,

Anna Marie Switzer 15:49
Yeah, well, that was incredible. I have so many questions for you, yeah. Karen has me on National Park Service and Cherry Point. So, I have so many, so many things to ask you. In terms of Cherry Point when you were work, like, when you started working in the ’70s, like, how would you say that environment was or, like, did you enjoy working there?

Heber Guthrie 16:20
Well, at first I didn't, because I didn't know what I had. I mean, but when you're married and two children, it's all about benefits then, and it did have good benefits. I always had good insurance, Blue Cross, Blue Shield. I mean, I mean, what better, you know. So, I've always stayed by that. We had annually, we had sick leave, but you could have used it one of them. I mean, and it weren't till later on, I learned you don't need take your sick leave. One day you'll be sick. You're gonna need two weeks or a month, I mean, still going to get paid, you know, take, it takes a while. I think already had to be about 25 or 26 old before your brain you fully develop so you know what you're doing. Well, you might be about 35 for me. Uh, anyway, yeah, the longer I was there, we rode in a carpool, four of us. So that was a good trip. You know, we all were about the same age, so we all had always had things to discuss: children, what they doing in school, how they doing this, and how you getting by. And, you know, the time just, it, just, it just went by. I met a lot of, I met some good, very good generals. Most of them were two star. When I went there, they had a, they had a station general, and a wing general was just a second air craft wing, the base is, so you had a station general, which is over the maintenance people, and then your

wing, because he's over to all the squadron, but they're in the same building. One was on the bottom floor, one's the top floor. So I got to meet a lot of those guys. And they're, they're good people. They got problems. They got problems just like we got. And met a lot of good engineers, people very smart, didn't mind sharing things for me, you know, which you know, helped me my job. I got go to some schools pertaining to our work, especially spec writing, you know, how to write specifications and sort of stuff like that. Helped me along the way. I never did learn a foreign language. I wish I had of, probably now you've just about got to, of course, in the contracting business. Now there's a lot of Hispanics just doing work, and they know how to talk to them. And so, I could see where that'd be a plus now to do that. So anyway, I stayed. I had 34 years. You know, it's a long time. And lucky we didn't have no serious accidents. It's 34-mile trip every morning, evening, and most of the guys are good driving. Most of them are good driver anyway, but yeah, it was good to me.

My father actually worked in the same building. When I went over to a maintenance, he worked in that same, very same building when he was out there. See, like I said, good benefits. I mean good retirement. You don't think about it when you first go. You just want to get home and, you know, do what you want to do. But in the end, you know, it pays off. I learned you had to plan. Sometime you plan and it don't happen, but you got to plan. You gotta say it is going to happen, you know. And I wish I'd done a little bit more planning towards the end, you know what I mean, and got things better. You know, financially, you know, because I actually stayed an extra year. I could have come out in 2007 but, you know, my stuff just wasn't right. So, I stayed there another year. Met a lot of interesting people. When I went there, I was a young man in the building. I was only 21, and most of those, lot of those men, helped build Cherry Point, the government housing, which had go out and make repairs. If you showed an address, they knew what was wrong with that house. I said, What? They said, Yeah, I guarantee you, it's about a wrath or something. I said, Well, it is. It's on the paper. He said, Well, we broke that the day we put it in. It's been there ever since the '40s. Now, just getting around and work on it. So that's pretty neat. You know, very knowledgeable about stuff, and a lot of stuff about tools. When I went there, I had only used a band saw, a table saw, maybe a jigsaw, but they had what they call mortise and tanning machines. They could build that door. We had boys could build that door like that, could make windows, amazing stuff. I've always afraid of that stuff because I didn't like my hands being by a knife, turning to 25,000 RPMs right there. I didn't like that, so maybe that's why I got all that the brick mason, a lot of them didn't have a thumb. True.

Anna Marie Switzer 21:29
Are these people, like from Down East, usually, or…?

Heber Guthrie 21:32
Most of them were from around New Bern, and they told me what happened: They'd be trying to cut a brick with a diamond cut of saw, and think about a diamond that's not going to, that skin's not going to stop that diamond. And a lot of times they will hold their finger too close, and so they, you know. It's kind of weird when you shake your hand, the thing's not there. But anyway, anyway.

Anna Marie Switzer 21:58
Were there a lot of accidents like that in Cherry Point, where, like things that you…?

Heber Guthrie 22:03

I think it was with the old class of people. They didn't have the safe equipment. They didn't wear a mask. Well, as fast as we saw it, as best I did, but didn't know no better, we would take it to the saw sheet and pull the regular arm saw right across where the dust would just go right up. No telling what was hanging over your head. I mean. And finally, they were smoking. They liked smoking in the shop. I was wondering about that in a carbon shop with wood, why would you want somebody? All you gotta do is flip it over some shavings, you got a fire, and usually it's when you go home. It happens late in the evening. Nobody's in there to tell that the roof's gone, you know, they see from… But anyway, they just didn't have it available. I think the men would have wore it, but they just weren't available. They were just, you throw your stuff, you just saw in it, dust in your face, you know, going about your business.

Anna Marie Switzer 23:03
By the time that you got there, do you think that, like it was, or like the safety equipment that you needed was available?

Heber Guthrie 23:09
Yeah, more, a lot more so then, lot more so then. We had a safety officer. It would come in the shop, you know. And, you know, checking on things. Glasses was hard, for people to put glasses on, you know, but back then, had no heavy goggles, and it will fog up. I mean, so here you are squinting. Well, that's not good if you don't what you doing, you'd cut your finger off. But they modernized glasses became available like you normally wear, but they're safety glasses, you know, protect your eyes. And course, the respirators was good. I know in boat building, they have what they call full face mask. It covers your whole face, and it had the cancers out here. I like them, because you could get right down to something grinding it. And I mean, sand it, well, that dust is coming right at you, but ain't bothering you. You can still see your work. I mean, you have goggles on, you can't see your work, but that with that mask, they were, they were pretty neat, called a full face mask. In boat building, the cold mold, I think California they, they don't have that because of the safety issues we call mold, because the glue is so toxic and the paint tool, and it is… You know, my brother was allergic to the epoxy, and he would obtain water. It could be a can epoxy there, lean close, and he would break out of the rashes. I say that kind of, but it seemed like, you know, he was, he was bad. He was allergic to it—his arm. It never did bother me bad. I knew it didn't. It weren't good for you. But I know some states. I know California, they don't because of safety issues. They don't allow that. Of course, you had to cut it. You had to grind it, the epoxy, you know, the glue. And of course, the cloth is just like fiberglass too. So that's not good. A friend of mine told me, said that that material, when you inhale it and it gets on your arm, he said, just like putting a sweater over it. You know what I mean? It don't, you don't get rid of it. Your body can't get rid of it. It just covers up. You know, directly your lungs, can't breathe, and it's due to all that stuff. But I think that that's got to be improved. Since I, last time I was in was about 2009. That's probably what? 10 years almost? Yeah, a lot. It's got to be approved, because I know boys are working it, you know, Jarrett Bay are right close to us. They're into that type building, and they don't complain much about, you know, painting is real toxic. They use, I won’t get the name wrong. You should use Aron, you know, real, real strong paint. Now, I kind of got out building boats because everybody wanted that on the boat, you know. They just didn't want a flat bottom skiff with two coats of flat white on it. They wanted fiberglass, you know. But my shop weren't designed—I didn't have the dust equipment, you know, to get the dust out of there and just—No, just, will No, just, just get out of it.

Anna Marie Switzer 26:29
Yeah, I'm glad that it's a lot safer now.

Heber Guthrie 26:31
Yeah, it is, it is they're leading now, at Manteo, they do a lot of up there at Manteo and Wanchese. And I'm not going to say no name, but I heard two of those builders died of liver, and they claim it was at dust and acetone is terrible for us. You know what I mean? Growing up when we've got that fiberglass, so we go to a gallon and put our hands around it like it's water, and do this with it, huh? And goes right up. It goes through and goes to—yeah, and they've probably got them boys too, but no, we didn't know about none of that. Gloves, we didn't want. Now you got gloves, I will say that, and get gloves now, very cheap, two, three, cent a piece, you know, so that stuff don't get on your hands. It probably about the biggest plus, especially with the glue, you know. So anyway, I've lived through it some kind of way.

Anna Marie Switzer 27:34
You made it through, yeah. When thinking about—my family is a military family. So, I think a lot about like, military culture. Do you think that, like, like, was it more so like interacting with, like, the engineers and the people that you're working with? Or did you feel like some of the military culture while working at Cherry Point?

Heber Guthrie 27:56
Oh, yeah, we did. We had to learn, we had to learn rank. Of course, we, you know, we want to go to talk to him. You had to call him Captain Anderson. You didn't call him Mister Anderson. You know, you had learn, we started like that. You know, my brother's in the Navy. So, a little bit, little bit of it was the same. But I kind of enjoy that they were, they were real to me. They were real respectful to me. You know, I was coming in to help them, you know, get something done, or build something or repair something. And I always enjoyed being around them. It seems like it's a rank in between this kind of, you know, they're trying to get up. They're kind of hard to get deal with, you know what I mean, but good, like the colonels and on the captains, I enjoyed them. We had, we had some that retired and came to work for us, you know, kind of got, got back in the civil service. And they were, they were, you know, good to be around. They knew a lot of stuff, you know, that we didn't, you know, because they were in it. You know, they knew, they knew the military. You know, Harkers Island is probably, well Down East is probably better known for men joining the Coast Guard than a branch of service. My brother's in the Navy, but majority of the boys went in the Coast Guard around here, and of course the water, basically the water, you know, of course, when the light, when Cape Lookout was a station, they probably want to get in. Some of them did. A lot of them did get stationed here. You know, it's like being home, you know, I'm not far from home. It's right over there, four miles away. That boy told me was four miles from the lighthouse. Shell Point is. One day, I asked dad, How far is it? He said, four miles. I said, well, ain't too far away, is it?

Anna Marie Switzer 29:52
Can maybe swim that.

Heber Guthrie 29:55
Yeah, I enjoyed. I enjoyed that, but I didn't get in the military. I don't, I just wanted that.

Anna Marie Switzer 30:04
So you said your, your father also worked at Cherry Point?

Heber Guthrie 30:08
Dad went there. He went there in, he went to, he worked to Holly Ridge, which is a town past Camp Lejeune, I think was part of Camp Lejeune. Yeah, a little town called Camp Davis was another little outline field.

Anna Marie Switzer 30:28
I think that Davis was the first one.

Heber Guthrie 30:30
Camp Davis might have been, Mm, hmm, yeah, Holly Ridge, but that's a long drive, but he worked hard. You know, that was, that green check looked good when you added government treasury on top of that. You knew that, you knew you could cash that. They weren't going to bounce, you know. So anyway, he started there, and he finally got transferred to Cherry Point, and he left there. I said he left there about '69 when he retired there. I don't know. I believe he might have had about 19 years. You know, he didn't get a big retirement. But he worked in housing, you know, repaired houses, floors, windows, stuff like that what he did. And then, when he, when he retired, that's, that's about, you know, my brother started in '67, so that put Dad just about right to get in, you know, to him, build both for him. Now, my brother started over across the bridge at Straits, but he finally moved here to Harkers Island. And the place was my mother's home place, which was my grandmother when they left, when they left Diamond City and moved to Harkers Island, that's where they settled, about 1903, best I can calculate. She was about 30 years old. So that was the whole home place. So, then dad just lived, he could walk there, you know? So that May, and then my brother lived on the same property where the shop was. And somebody was talking about the bridge last year, the new bridge and the old one was wood. I said, well, guess what? I said, they cut up that old wood bridge and they sold it. And I said, we bought sections of it, and that boat house, called the boat house, that building, the poles, is the decking out of that bridge. I said, you walk in there and you see the road, the asphalt side. We put that out because you couldn't drive at night. I said you could see, and you see white lines on it where it was the middle of the road in that shop.

Anna Marie Switzer 32:30
Yeah.

Heber Guthrie 32:31
And my brother bought $6,000. Now that's a lot of money back in 1969. He bought $6,000 from branch bank to build that shop, and we built it. We did the labor, that was just material. And anyway, the—we built that, it was 32 by 64. And don't you know, the second boat he got to build, it was longer than the shop. It always happens. Always happens. You're right by the shop. Just say they go there. Just what I thought, he got a boat bigger than the shop. There's a sternum sticking out in the weather with a flashing on the top. We get the same thing, same exact thing. But anyway, yeah, we built that building. Dad made the, he made the trusses. You know, had him. He had it in his head how to make the trusses. And we started the boat. And what we did as the boat came up, the building did too. We kind of used the boat to build the building. So, the owner will call every couple weeks.

What you got done to my boat? Oh, we got sides on the deck, and we going to put the roof on the building this coming week. Well, the boat's high enough now. Anyway.

Anna Marie Switzer 33:46
Yeah, do you—thinking about like your dad working at Cherry Point, do you think that like, how did he feel about Cherry Point that's different than how you felt when you first started? And then, how is that different from like when you retired in 2009? How do you, how do you think people changed how they felt?

Heber Guthrie 34:05
From his experience to mine?

Anna Marie Switzer 34:07
Yeah.

Heber Guthrie 34:08
I think I had it better than he did.

Anna Marie Switzer 34:10
Why so?

Heber Guthrie 34:11
Because I got out of the, I got out of the hammer and that part. I got into the office part, you know what I mean.

Anna Marie Switzer 34:18
Did he enjoy it at all?

Heber Guthrie 34:20
I think he did. He didn't leave. Oh, he used all his sick leave. I'll put it that way. Know what I mean? So, but I think later on, he saw my brother was getting in the boat building, and I believe that's why he went to do it, so he kind of just put. You know, he's like, boy, if I could just work till 19, if I can just make it till December the 31st next year, I'm out of here. Yeah, know what I mean, I believe, I believe that's what he was. But, like, I say, he get a lot of different condition, and he was back in the day when it weren't much protection, too. But he lived, was 78 years old.

Anna Marie Switzer 35:05
Did you, like you've spoken about how you really enjoy carving and boat building when you were working at Cherry Point. Was that ever something that you wanted to do full time, but just kind of had to stay with the benefits, or was it like something…?

Heber Guthrie 35:19
Yeah, I wanted to do boat building full time, but I knew I couldn't make it. I didn't have, well, I didn't have the smarts. My brother did. I mean, he did it full time for about, well, he was here for about 15 years when he

retired. But I just, you know, he just had… No, I could build little skiffs, but your money was in them big 50 foot boat, where the money was. You know, you gotta have crew, gotta have people to work with you. And sometimes family can't work together. Now, him and Dad did that. Got along good, you know. But, uh, yeah, I think, yeah, I think I had it a lot better. But yeah, I went to, I went to. Some boys did go on their own carving. Davie Hawks did, and he did all right, I guess. But I had enough timings that I wouldn't risk. No, no, no, not. Now, no time to go out on them. Now, you know what I mean, you stay there and you know you would do retire one day and then do that. See young boys 'round here, they won't do things, and we try to encourage them. Pick your, pick your career very early. Get you 20 years before you're 50 years old, or sometimes 40. You go in the military at 20 and get out at 40. 40 years old, ain't, I mean, I mean, that's really kind of young. 40 is young to me right now. But, and, you know, that's, that's how it was, that's how it was, for me, you know, get your career, you know, started, but, yeah, I want to do other things that I knew that I couldn't put that aside and take a risk, you know. And speaking my insurance, I had, like I said, I was 33 or 34 I had a ruptured disk, number five vertebrae. And I was, I was there, and they found out what it was. I went from January to April, and nobody could tell what it was. Finding the right doctor, you know, the right one knows. So he knew it was. So they, they fused it, and I was out of work for about two weeks, you know. Well, that was a whole check. Whole check I would have missed, you know, I've had hernia operations, uh, appendix of all things. Yeah, I've been cut on a lot. And, uh, insurance. Now my daughter, she believes insurance too. She's got Aflac, you know what I mean, and anyway, she, she's a firm believer in good insurance. But yeah, you have that, especially when you ride by and you see somebody doing what you want to do, and it looks like they're enjoying ourselves. And got a new truck, they got a new pickup truck and a boat. But guess what? We probably got a payment. Probably got a payment go with it. People say, how does he get that boat? I said he's just, he's a payment. Guy, you making a payment? Yeah. Well, I spoke about Branch Bank. We had a guy. His name was Rock Hardison, was the President here at Beaufort when that started, about '66 and he was very good to the fishermen. He was a charter boat captain himself. So he had a, you know, he had a soft spot, in his heart for the fishermen and the boat builder, you know. So we went to him, you know, for money. Sometimes I would build a boat on, like a skank boat, you know, I mean, so I go to Rock. I said, Rock, gonna be a 22 foot boat. Don't have a cent. He said, What do you need? I said, well, I need about $3,000. He said, Well, how about a 90 day note? Well, I said, Yeah, that'd be right. Well, you know, 90 days is a long time until you hit about 65, and 70, you got 10-12, days left, then it's not so long. I told somebody last year. I said, if you want the wintertime to go by fast—January, go get you a 90 day note, just like that. It'd be March, be March, just like that. You wonder what happened? But he was he was good. He was good to me about stuff like that. Yeah.

Anna Marie Switzer 39:43
Well, it seems like you have, you've done so many great things in the community. Once you've retired, it seems.

Heber Guthrie 39:49
I have. I've been fortunate. I have. I really enjoyed the school the kids. I get a kick out of them, because I grew up in a different time. You know.

Anna Marie Switzer 39:58
Got the phones, man.

Heber Guthrie 39:58
And they got all these things. You know, you know, carried on with them. And I had one too. And one day was building, uh, let's see, was it this year? Yeah, we have 40, we have 44 scooters, and they're all building a two foot model. Now, you can imagine the chaos some days, you know, man, so many clamps were around, and we're all around the table. And anyway, my phone rings, you know, and it's some kind of telemarketer. And I pretend I'm talking to a psychiatrist, and they keep looking at me. Say, Mr. Heber, you got a psychiatrist? I said, I told them, I said, How about if you were me with 44 like you around this table with knives, chisels, saws, pencils? Don't you think you'd need help? Anyway, but I enjoy them. I try to sub. I went and said, this past year. Oh lordy. They got me in trouble subbing.

Anna Marie Switzer 40:57
My parents are teachers.

Heber Guthrie 40:58
And they don't get paid enough. But one thing, you can't discipline kids now, like I grew up, we were afraid of this teacher and more afraid of the principal.

Anna Marie Switzer 41:09
My dad was my principal.

Heber Guthrie 41:11
I mean, I went for years. I didn't know the principal name. I knew her desk, and her office, but I walked around it, I didn't even touch the door, you know. But nowadays, matter of fact, today, the parlor thing to do in the Morehead is about change in public schools. Uh, Richie Paler. He's, he's a native Harkers Island.

Anna Marie Switzer 41:33
I met him last night.

Heber Guthrie 41:34
Okay, yeah, good guy. He's the age of mine. He's 52 about 52, 53. He's good. I like Richie. He was over when we built boat at Smyrna. That's how I got away with it. He knew, he knew me. He knew me over there. So anyway, yeah, I'm very fortunate help-wise and my daughter, son, lives to Morehead, and they want me to move there. And I said, I'm not ready yet, because all my family's here. You know what I mean, you two's all right, I'm all right. I've got school friends, teachers, friends here in our church. I said I'm fine right here. Cape Lookout, just like another family out there. They've been good to me. My boss, George, just as good as my father. He's been good to me so, and I want to give stuff back, if you want to call it that. I mean, I want the kids to and what we do in school is called CTE. It's Career Technical Education is what it's about. So it's like we're giving them a glimpse of a trade. You might want to be a carpenter, you might not, but you find out right now. I mean, if you don't like painting or sanding, find something else. I mean, don't get into that. That's kind of, kind of, what it's what it's about. I tried to teach, also getting along with each other, sharing tools, ideas, helping one another, you know what I mean. Being kind, courtesy, you all got a big job to do. But guess what? Some days you're not going to be able, Jim's going to have a C clamp today. You're going to wait tomorrow, you know? And so anyway, I've had a

good time. Our principal's very young. I don't know how old you are. She might not much. She might be younger than you. Anyway, I do. I knew her. I knew her, but she never met me. So, I was walking down the hall, the tardy bell had rung. They have a about three bells before school start. Anyway, I think the tardy bell had rung. So, I went to the office and I say, okay—her name is Lewis, Reba—and here comes Miss Reba, you know. And I walk into some stuff in orange, and I said, Honey, don't you know the tardy bell ringing, ain't you late for class, you know? She said, Mr. Heber I'm the principal right here. I said, Oh. She got a kick out of that. Thought she was tardy.

Anna Marie Switzer 44:07
So funny.

Heber Guthrie 44:09
That's a good school out there. It's the problem is our school drive. Our kids are so far away to get here. Cedar Island had to drive East Carteret, and it's just awful. But I don't know. It's just not enough kids. I don't know how to keep this [Harkers Island Elementary] open. I bet they ain't got 100 here in the elementary school, 110 at the most. Anyway, that's the only thing but to participate and activities and sports, if you look at what, they just don't have a team. It's just not enough, you know what I mean, and you gonna get together anyway when you get to East Carteret, so you just want to do it, they just wanna try to do it in middle school. The teacher, I have women, this pastor, name is Cameron. She's from, she lives up in Cape Carteret, a nice lady, teacher, and we've got along good. And she's, she, when she found out I was gonna sub, she said. I said, Look, you don't call nobody. I'm your sub, you know what I mean. So she's had it easy, because I know what she'd be doing. You know what I mean, so that's, that's where it got real good this year with her, yeah.

Anna Marie Switzer 45:21
Well, thinking a little bit… I read, I heard you talk to Ryan Stancil a little bit. Did you talk to him about, like, what you've been doing with the lighthouse keeper?

Heber Guthrie 45:34
Oh, him and did the light, Our State thing? Yes.

Anna Marie Switzer 45:37
Yes. I read it. I loved it.

Heber Guthrie 45:39
Yep, that's Ryan and Baxter.

Anna Marie Switzer 45:40
Would you mind telling me—yeah, yeah, they're both so great, yeah. Would you mind telling me a little bit about like, like, what Cape Lookout and Shackleford mean to you and like, or the life, or the lighthouse?

Heber Guthrie 45:55

Well, everybody here on the Island has got a connection over there, of course. Somewhere down the line. Third, fourth generation, they live there. And to give you an example, the Fourth of July, I tell everybody, the Fourth of July, Harkers Island people is going to find a way to get over there and anchor around that lighthouse. They going to do either car payment, house payment. The kid might not have, they might not have food a couple days. They going to buy gas and boat to get over there. It's going to happen just, you know. And I tell you, it's because of that attachment, you know what I mean, great granddaddy John lived here, or Aunt Sarah lived over here and right over there, where they had their house, you know. And they fished. That's what it is, and it's the same way by me, I mentioned my grandmother lived to Shackleford Banks, but the story she always told her grandfather James Brian Guthrie Singer was actually on the way by on ship. And if you read your history like Arthur Barlowe, some of those early sailors, even Francis Drake, they always had their law when they left Cape Fear, one day sail—that's only 80 miles from here, so you can get here in a day in a sailboat, not that far by water. One day sail, they always came up. They caught the headwaters where them shoals went out in the ocean. And right in that inside there was that deep hole which, which is called Lookout Bight, and, well, my great, great, great grandfather, he was on such a ship, he came in there, and he just loved the place. He never went back. He didn't get back from that ship. He started his family right there. You know what I mean. So, there was his children, their children, their children. Here's Heber. So, I have that connection too, you know. And I tell people when they get older, you know, we're looking at on the water. I said, do you ever try to look out there and imagine what that looked like in 1800 with 10, and I read sometimes it means 20, ships would be anchored right there in that water, all them big schooners sitting out there waiting, you know what I mean, getting water or food and leaving, and no telling where they go, where they be the next day. In and out here, just all the time, right there, right out there. Just, just amazing. Well, when I got Lighthouse uniform, it got serious to me, you know. And anyway, I'll tell you this lady, she retired, her name of Karen over here, another Karen, and I had to check out the uniform. I mean, she had everything itemized. What I got? Socks, pants, vest, coat. Weren't no shoes, belt, four, three ties. They're all black. They're all black ties. Well anyway, well, every time when she I see her, she said, You still got a uniform? I said, Karen, yes. She said, Well, you've had it a month. I said, Well, Karen, it ain't no time. Well, anyway, the, I guess he's the, Jeff. What would you call him? The director?

Anna Marie Switzer 49:12
Jeff, the superintendent.

Heber Guthrie 49:13
Superintendent Jeff, you know. And we got acquainted with Jeff, and he told me, he told me, one day in front of her, he said, Look, I'd rather he'd be using that uniform out here in this school, then he'd be hanging in that closet not doing it no good. So he said that, and I looked her and said Guess what? I'm going to have another two months. I'm having it for two years.

Anna Marie Switzer 49:34
Yeah!

Heber Guthrie 49:36
No, I enjoy that. You kind of had to educate yourself. You had to read a lot of stuff. You know about lighthouse and I've tried that, plus I know stories and different people told me, and I just love to share it, especially with

these young kids, elementary school. We're being to Tiller, Smyrna over here, Earth Day we had out here. Mm, hmm, well, downstairs. The first day, I didn't go get it, and I believe what it was, I had been used to looking at pictures. So the next day, I had the younger kids, and I said, You know what best thing to do? You need to create some kind of situation where you can get them involved in what you're doing. So, on the way here, you know, I live about 10 miles, seven miles away, all along, I said, what can you do to make this different? So anyway, I come up with idea of doing it in the village room by the fireplace in a perfect place. Had that big rug. I call that the magic carpet, you know, I wish I could make it take off, because I know they'd enjoy it. I said, y'all sit on the magic carpet. We're going for a ride. So anyway, I had a, I had a piece of, like a slip of paper and pretended was a message from Portsmouth about a ship coming by here, and we need to see on that ship and not hitting them shoals. Well, I have these little lights about this long, you know, little flashlight. So, we've got all in the group, everybody's got a little light, and we're pretending we're looking out that way, and that light flashes every 15 seconds. So, we would time them, I would time them, and I go on and off. You'd be surprised. And the teacher said that never, ever been this quiet between those 15 seconds. It was the strangest thing has ever been. We say off, no applauding, not a sound, and 15 seconds is a long time if you're waiting for it, you know what I mean, that was weird, and that. Well, very, very good friend of mine, who was teacher to Atlantic, she said, I heard, she called me. Said, I heard you had a good day. I said, What do you mean? She said, them kids come in here, and they were tore up about you, about 15 seconds. And where did I see a kid? What was it, and he remembered that 15 seconds. I said, Well, man, you accomplish them. They know that Flash is 15 seconds. I bet that Mom and Daddy probably do.

Anna Marie Switzer 52:11
And that's the type of thing that you remember as you grow up.

Heber Guthrie 52:14
Yeah, of course, well they did it. They actually done. They turn that light on and cut it off every 15 seconds. Oh, yeah, because mothers, mother's generation, June-August, they were on Shackleford side. And ? Guthries was on the Cape Lookout side. Of course. You know, the inlet came in 1933 to cause slipping up. And so, before then you could, you know, go from one place over to the other. But that's, that's my big thing. I just wish, when I was younger, my grandmother, leave with us for about 15 years, right in house with us. And she had every day, “y'all hear what happened?” And of course, we'd go no we gotta go swimming. Well, I wish somebody should recorded those stories, that she has some of her experiences over there. But what I do remember is about when they whaled over there. They killed whales. And people get all that all wrong too. They didn't do it for the sport. They did it for the income. It was seven or $800 for that whale. That was a lot of money in 1800. Well, one spring, the whaling was just about over, and so the men, the whalers, was on this side in the Sound, out in the water where the children, she called them little children. The Little children were playing, and the high hill over there, it was called High Hill. So it was a lookout spot for whales. Well, they didn't go up by to look for no whales. They just want to be on that high hill. Well, guess what? Way out there in the ocean, a whale spouted. You know how they do. So one of the kids said there's a whale, so they looked around—dads, you couldn't holler so far away. So they came down that hill. Now their whaling boats are still on the ocean side. So they had been with them, uncles and fathers enough, they knew what to do to go get that whale, and so they rode off there in that ocean and harpooned that whale. And back then, when the mothers saw it happening, they got, which my grandma said, I don't know why some of the men weren't killed, because, you know, once that whale is

harpooned, he's going to the bottom, he's going to take you with him. Mm, hmm. He don't like it, especially the tail, uh. But anyway, the women, the head bonnets, and that was sort of signal. So they're like this, so the husband sees them, and they know the sound, trouble going on. So by the time they get to the shore, they're already out there in the ocean. But she said they got that whale ashore, and back then they named whales, and they named that whale the Little Children Whale. Now there's a whale in the National Museum of History in Raleigh called the Mayflower Whale that was killed here too. That was probably one of the biggest whales they killed here. It took two crews, I've always read, to get that whale ashore, but the skeleton is in Raleigh of that particular whale they killed there. But she had other stories. You know about weather. She was always afraid of thunderstorms, and I bet she would be out on that island, I would. You don't be escaping those thunderstorms. There's no nothing. You're no more than animals. You're no more than one of them horses. Now, my boss man used to tell in the summer. Well, like the day we go, we drop everybody off, and he said. He said, we can run in wind, we can run in wind, and we can run in rain, but we cannot run in thunderstorms. It's against Coast Guard regulation. We run in lightning and thunderstorms over here. So if you're on the beach and you get caught in a thunderstorm, you make sure you're the shortest person in a group. [laughter] Make sure you're the shortest person in the group. When you get in the huddle, you make sure you lowest you can get. Get under or learn your lesson. But they had hardships over there. I think about medical stuff that—nowadays we, babies, now are vaccinated. They never have what, typhoid, it's gone, but they had that stuff. They had to deal with that stuff, like my neck and all that. They had that stuff too. You go out of that cemetery to the west end of Shackleford, look at those dates. 52 year old man, 48, very young people. Men died. You know what? They were babies. Women died. Childbirth, too. Over there, my generation couldn't do it. And, you know, that's how it is. They come along. They were, they were made for that time to get to that time, to get to that time, you know? But, uh, now I got in—we got time?

Anna Marie Switzer 52:23
Yeah!

Heber Guthrie 52:24
I got real interested in how that lighthouse was built, you know what I mean. And it's very little information that I can find, but I think one summer my daughter and I went over, just to ride over. And it was cool. And we walked up to the lighthouse. I said, Meredith, do you, will you look at them bricks there? Is them bricks trying to tell us something? Look how them bricks is laid there. And, you know, a brick like this is called a stretcher. You know, just you normally see—if you turn it like this, it's called a header. You just see the end of it. If you turn it up, it's called a sailor. If you turn like this, it's called a soldier. You know what I mean? Now think about a brick has to be sized. That one brick has to be the right size. So anyway, you take one and put on the other. It can't get any longer. You know what I mean, it's all gotta equal. So, we're gonna look. And I said, Look, there's five, there's courses, there's five one, there's five courses. And then guess what? You got one like this, all the way around, five more all the way around. Well, that's called the English bond. And why it's called that, behind that bricks that you see is another one. And so they turn this one around that tied these two together. See, they didn't have that war, uh, what do you call that stuff now? That matting and rebar. None of it over there, you didn't have back it in the day, it all had to be done with them bricks. So that's how that was built. Now you get up to the, almost to the last top window, instead of five of these, there's three of these. And the reason, think about your wall, your staircase is plumb, but the outer wall is tapered in about two and a half degrees. And so when it gets

up here, guess what, the wall gets a little bit thinner. So then they, then they started doing that. You know what I mean, to kind of beef it up as it got to the very top of it. And I didn't know this—the very, word of where the pane starts, the diamonds or there's a rim around there. There's a rim around it 'bout this thick. Now, on the ground, it looks like this, but if you really look at it and count it, it's about 12 inches thick. That's the floor that goes all the way across the lighthouse. That's the floor. And when you're in the staircase, you come through that floor, and what you're in then is what's called a service room. You got service room, then you got the balcony, and you got the lantern room, which is where the light is at, right now, now what they're saying is when the repairs come along, they're going to take that roof off of it, that tops coming off of it, and do some repairs with never kind of it looks like about 18 separate panels that makes that curve to the top, makes that circle. Well, some of them, you look in a glass is like a shatter. It's not fell out of it. I don't know why, unless it's some type of safety glass. But a lot it is shattered over, you know, over time. Lightning, I don't know, lightning might have hit it sometime another, I don't know anyway, that that's, that's how, how it was built. Now, when, you know, we moved Cape Hatteras in 1999, and so when they dug down, you get to the base of it. That lighthouse was sitting, it was seven and a half feet deep into the bottom was timbers, wood chambers. They were sitting on, probably the same thing right here. You know what I mean, we had no way of pouring concrete, that net, that time, bricks. Well, not far from where I live, there's a kiln. There's another kiln over what's called Crow Hill Road. So, there was two possibilities, two places that could have made the bricks for it. Brown's Island. They used timbers of clay over there. They had the clay. They had the sand. They could very easy, very easy, right there, locally, right here, locally. But stuff like that interested, uh, interested me. You know, how did they build it? Now, I've heard, I've not read it, but someone told me there's only, like, two brick masons that were actually laying the bricks. The rest of it were labors. I said, Well, you know what? Why would you want a crowd? Because more people, you got more chances of making a mistake. You know what I mean? Just like this here was very simple. You think about it, five courses. Course this way, five more, very easy. Get your head as you're as you're as going around it. That lighthouse is almost 100 feet in circumference to the base of it, bigger than what you think; it's far away.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:02:02
When I went up and close, I was like, this is huge.

Heber Guthrie 1:02:04
Yeah, yeah. 28 and a half feet across the bottom of it. So it's big lighthouse. Of course, Cape Hatteras is the largest one we have, 193 feet high, and they're doing a lot of work in it right now.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:02:16
We went to go see it, but we couldn't really—there is a lot of stuff around it.

Heber Guthrie 1:02:20
It's amazing. When they moved that lighthouse. So I didn't think that was possible, but they moved it.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:02:25
It seemed intense. Yeah, crazy.

Heber Guthrie 1:02:27
Yep, they moved it.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:02:29
When looking at the lighthouse, one thing that I've looking at is like the National Park Service. Do you have any memories or feelings towards the National Park Service, and like when they came in?

Heber Guthrie 1:02:43
Oh, well everybody was upset. And a lot, they got a lot of bad rap. They was told that the Park Service burnt down those houses over there. They didn't—owners did. You know, a lot of the owners told me they did. I said, Well, why didn't you tell people that, you know what I mean? Don't blame it on them if you did it. You know, I can see their side. Now, my grandmother, she was, well mommy used to tell me about where they live. Well, they didn't have no deed to it. Now, 7 homes in the Cape, to the Cape that had deeds to, you know what I mean, to own them properly, could prove it. But what she did, she didn't have no, she didn't have no deed, but we could walk in there and back in the day, they had them real pretty dishes. They had that blue trim around them, another guy named, well, we see some of that on the ground, in the sand. So you knew people lived there. So we were kind of attached over there, more so than to the Cape, you know what I mean, but we didn't own a camp over there. People had camps, and you were welcome to use camps. Lot of people tell us, we don't lock our camp. If you get over here, you're fishing, you get caught in the thunderstorm. You run here, I'd rather you open the door and go in than tear the door up trying to get in, which made sense, you know what I mean. That's how it was, a lot of them. But Yup, everybody, everybody, like I said, everybody, most people got upset about it. We're not going to be able to do this and do that. And I'm thinking, Well, if you look back in time, you're doing more than you could back then. It's more accessible. Now people might not like the ferry going over there, you know what I mean. Well, it's a park, and people read nowadays. I mean, very quickly, you can find out stuff. And we have people all over the world come over there. I met a boy. He was surfer from Australia, and he thought I'm from Melbourne cause the way that I talk. Said, are you from Melbourne? I said, What? He said, You know Melbourne? I said, No. I said, Well, are you from Sydney? He said, Yeah. How'd you know? I said, Well, I'm from Melbourne. I know what you're like. I said, No, sir, I'm not from over there. But they kept them all over the world to go over there. The point, the beach they talk about is… Nothing like out on that point. Like I said, I've been all over Hawaii and everywhere. I never, I've never seen nothing like that beach. And people will complain, yep, there's a lot of trucks over there where you got the man up here that you can cross the Core Sound. We have 10 UTVs you can rent. He's got 10 too. Matt, he's got 10 too. People, look, I see cars from Virginia, West Virginia. What's happening, Hatters and those beaches, too many people sort of finding out they can drive down here, go over there. Got a whole lot more space, but, I mean, it's big enough, even the busy, busy, like Fourth of July. I mean, oh yeah, you can't, but there are still places you can go, you know. So yeah, they were hard feelings. Matter of fact, I wrote a poem, I think it, I think it got in the paper about it, about what was going on. If I get a copy, if I find I'll give you a copy. I wrote a poem. I think it's '83. Yeah, I wrote the story. It was in poem form, about what was going on over there.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:06:15
Oh, I would love that.

Heber Guthrie 1:06:17
If they get hold, but they might not accept me no more. Gonna kick me off the reservation. Take me in for 'em. Now, neat thing we do is Christmas, they light the lighthouse. I think it's 10 days before Christmas that illuminate the white diamonds. And so the ferry, we take people over for like a two hour trip, like seven to nine. And, of course, it's cold most of the time, but I do take the uniform and I'll go to the lighthouse and talk about, you know, how it's built, and what year it was built, and all that stuff over there, and that, you know, stuff like that goes on, just like Monday. I think that's what we're going to do with the teachers, me and Catherine.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:07:02
I'm sure they'll love it.

Heber Guthrie 1:07:04
The keepers are real nice people. Let's see, the month of June, a couple stayed the whole month. Now, they're tough. They're tough. They want me to, there's something going on over here. I donate a decoy, and Sabrina [Godin] wants me to go spend a night to Sally's, or somewhere over there. And anyway, I said, Sabrina, not in this time of year, not now. I can't, I can't take, I can't, I couldn't do it now, but come October, November, yeah, I tried it, you know. Now, one Wednesday, and this was an accident, one Wednesday, that there was something going on. And they said, why are you in a uniform? It was hot. But I said Heber, try to make it till 10, 11 o'clock, you know what I mean, and then you can catch your boat home. Well, the lady, the lady weren't on the first boat, I supposed to get the second one. So I took her spot. When we got to the dock, the two, the keepers, husband wife was coming off 'cause Wednesdays are a prep day. They come ashore, wash clothes, get food, you know what I mean, freshen up, you know, get back to civilization a little while, or they, you know, lose, lose your sanity. So they were getting, I said, Well, where you crowd going? They said, Well, we didn't know you was coming. I said, well, is the keeper's quarter open? They said, No. I said, Hey, go on. I would love to be in there. Well, Glenn, you know, I've mentioned Glenn, Glenn's got a key, so I went down there and opened the doors, turn the videos on, and I had the best time. People come up, you know, talk, and I enjoyed it that day. I told her, I said, next time somebody wants to run away for four or five hours, let me know, I'll be happy to stay over there and talk to 'em. Yeah, but it's hot out there now. I'm kind of thinking about, I'm already thinking about Monday, how it's going to be Monday. I'm already thinking about Monday. Now, I was a kid when the astronauts come along. You know, in the ‘60s, I believe that uniform, their suits had a little, little pipes inside that water circulated. And I told him, over there, if you can get me one of them and put under that suit, I could stay right out there.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:07:04
You can stay out there all day!

Heber Guthrie 1:09:05
I can stay right out there in that heat as long as I've got water going around, like a radiator.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:09:19
Yeah, you might need that. Nothing like Carolina heat. Do you remember, what, what makes the difference between the superintendents that were in charge and like, the ‘70s, the ‘80s and the ‘90s versus Bob Vogel?

Heber Guthrie 1:09:22
Yeah, I tell you, Jeff [West], the superintendent, makes a difference too. We've had Jeff and Bob Vogel. Might've heard of him years back. He was real good to this place, and Jeff's good, good to us here too. I know. Well, I hear a lot about Karen and, well he, and he's real good, and he lives on the island. I said, Jeff, when this, you wouldn't of moved, you, you couldn't live on Harkers Island when this first started here. I said, Man, they'd of burned your house. I said, you're lucky. If you would have been in the '70s—But he's got, Jeff's gotta good personality, you know what I mean. He's that type of person and, uh, but anyway, yeah, that person can make a difference. You know about here? I don't, I think, I don't think it was their fault. They were put here to get it started. You know what I mean, so they were kind of in a bad position. To tried to make friends with your enemies. I mean, right off the bat, you've got to be good to them. "And, well, how can I be good to them? And they're threatening me and going to try to sink the boats. They don't want me over there. They're shooting at me. How can I be kind to them?" That, that it was a bad situation, as time went on, well a lot of those people passed away. People tell it like it is. A lot of them old timers gone, you know what I mean. And then as time, when Bob was here, what was going on? He was, he was here when they opened the lighthouse to climb it, I think. About that time frame.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:10:30
Mm, hmm. I think so.

Heber Guthrie 1:11:09
Because I know they did stamp. They did a stamp, post office stamp of the lighthouse. It had it on it, and have had a huge one by the stairs, had a huge stamp, eight foot high. Anyway, they took the cover off of it. And there's probably a copy here. You… probably, anyway, they took the cover off of it. Here's our lighthouse, just this pretty shoreline, and right out front is a boat painted red. I said, You know what? Somebody up north did that because nobody right here has a red boat, but Yankees. Boston, Massachusetts, where he would do that painting, that red boat sitting there. Anyway, anyway, yeah, yeah. It was, it was, I don't know all the names, but I know the first couple were—oh, one of his wife taught school. What's her name? Oh my land, I see her over once in a while. He was superintendent, and people can't get along him. But that's, that was a reason. They said things have changed, just like this organization and the carvers, you know, that split up kind of in about 2000, you know what I mean. They had their, they had their show same day, and oh my land, hell broke loose because of that. Well, I told them guys, I said, Well, do you think that museum was going to sit down there and billion dollar building and not be open for the public to come in? What were you guys thinking? Do you think it's just a place for business to come in and go out there? You know what I mean? I said, No, it's more to it. It's more to it than that. And, uh, anyway, I know Karen can you some. I know she's got some stories.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:13:00
When you say that people, like the people that were going around burning like their own camps, like, how, what age were these people, or the younger people, or?

Heber Guthrie 1:13:10

No, most of them that I knew were, like, middle age. It was a, it was a kind of thing where I don't want you to have it. If I can't use it and sleep in it you're not going to do it, you know what I mean. But you know, Dr. Rule's [Dr. Stan Rule] doing a book now about camps.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:13:27
I'm speaking to him.

Heber Guthrie 1:13:28
I'm thinking, well, how good, nice would it be if we had these camps. We didn't know what, if they're going to burn them down or not, they might still be there if they left them alone, you know what I mean? It could have still been there. Now, I'll tell you. And I'll tell you this now, I know it's all about budgeting. It seems like over there it's hard to get money to maintain those cabins more so what it is at Portsmouth. But see, Portsmouth, the owners, you know, before the Park Service, did an excellent job of maintaining their buildings. So when it became a part, those houses were already up to where they should be. It weren't that way over here, see. They were, they were behind maintenance wise. So it took, it takes, it seemed like it takes a lot more effort to do stuff over there. But I know, 'cause I hear Jeff talking. Well, he got, we got two million to do this, and I gotta put it here. We got channel them, I mean, he's got a lot going on too. He's like this with balls all the time. You know what I mean? Juggling them, and who do I make happy? The commercial fishermen? They want a channel, or go late, or, you know, somebody's gonna get aground and get killed right there. And what, you know. So I know he's got some, lot of stuff going on him, but we appreciate the channel. And of course, the beach they put in front of lighthouse is just night and day what it used to be. And that's attracted a lot of people. Because you can anchor your boat right there, you can throw your empty can in your boat. You're that close to your boat, you know what I mean? It wasn't like that. Used to your boat was way out there because the shoal. See, now it just drops off, so you're sitting in your lounge chair, and know you're going to boat, from that fan, you know what I mean?

Anna Marie Switzer 1:15:22
Mm hmm.

Heber Guthrie 1:15:23
And I know, I know it's what it is. But of course, there's always people say, Well, next time have a storm, it's going. Well, I… probably, you know, you just got to deal, you just got to deal with it. But I did hear Jeff said, If, believe, we got a channel now, marked that now a corps of engineers can come along and keep it dredged out, which makes sense, and not lose again, you know what I mean.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:15:49
Yeah.

Heber Guthrie 1:15:49
Because it was dangerous. I mean, we had what's called the s terms, the S, a Z and a W, when you got through there, you know. And we hit bottom, them boats hit bottom too now and then. It'd be very few, we hit bottom, sure did. But I like it like it is. That's kind of where it was originally. I remember growing up, it was a straight line.

It used to be a straight line all the way right on until you make a hard right and go to light house. When I, when I grew up over there. Yep.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:15:59
Well, are you? Are you? Do you still have a little bit of time to answer a couple more questions?

Heber Guthrie 1:16:30
Yeah!

Anna Marie Switzer 1:16:30
Okay, perfect. Um, I think we're, we're thinking about working on a museum exhibit just to show how the community has changed. And when you think about change in the past, but what are the big points that you, like, immediately come to mind?

Heber Guthrie 1:16:49
The biggest change on the island here is that property being sold, and there's nobody at fault but the residents. They live in a place, say the waterfront, they live in a place, and they live it, and they get disabled or whatever, and they sell it, they put it on the market. Now I would guess like z piece of water for probably 50, $60,000 on that waterfront. My sister had a waterfront property. My brother had a waterfront property. And of course, Mother's were, where he was, but when he sold his and, I mean, the next the next week, you couldn't ever got that back. You know what I mean. Once it went out his hands, I said, you're not going to get that back for that. I think he got 60,000 but it had a house on it, and the shop, I said, you're not going to get that back for $60,000 no more that's done. You know what I mean. And see now a lot of these people have had homes here now are retired, so now they're living here. So they're mixing in with us now, like to the grocery store, Billy's. I go in there the other day, I have no idea whose people are, hey, hey. And I said, John, who was that? Well, he lives up the road. And he bought somebody's house. I said he's, he said he moved here, he retired, I mean. And I said, John, in a way, he's keeping you in business. He said, Yeah, he is. He is keeping me in business, because the locals that used to trade with you are gone, you know, so you got to have that replacement.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:17:33
Yeah. Where do you see that going in the future?

Heber Guthrie 1:18:35
Well, it's, I don't know how it's going. Will it stop? Will it stop? Well, there ain't no more property to be sold. And I don't know why. I don't know if the county building—what do they call it—planning, I'm sure they got a plan for Harkers island. Well, you think they would. I mean, we, I mean, we don't have no mayor here or anything. I'm sure the county does. And you know, at some point you're just gonna say we're going to call the psychiatrists. No I'm kidding. I'm messing. [laughter] You can see how them kids are laughing, I do that.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:19:10
I hope I'm not like one of those kids.

Heber Guthrie 1:19:12
Say I'm going to call the psychiatrist. And when I do that, I go in a, we had a little room where a little fridge was. I had to go in there because I couldn't look at them. I would've started laughing. I couldn't look at them, my face. I had to go in there and pretend I'm talking to him. No, I, what down here I see is nothing gonna go happen down here, 'cause government, this is property, but you start that way, even though, even today it's not many lots left and the RV park, I don't see them building another one of them. And I don't know. I don't know, Would it be a good thing for the Harkers Island to be incorporated? I don't know. I think they tried it one time, but it got voted down. Maybe we, maybe they need a mayor. I mean I own property here. I didn't live here, but I own property here. I don't know. The other thing, and this is happening, where I am, in my neighborhood, on here. People that buy property, that buy property, all right. Say it's 200 feet square, and they'll build a room on the house. They'll start bringing a boat over here. And now they don't have no room. They've run out of space and seems like they want you over here to allow them to park their car, maybe over here on your side the fence. That's happened a little bit, or my piece of property is, you know. And I'm thinking, Man, you saw what you had. you know what I mean. Now you think it's right. I should loan you this so you can, so your two sons, they come in separate cars. That's the problem. Everybody's got a car, you know. They come in their cars. Now you have nowhere for them to park. Then, now you're over here on this man's property. You know, the, they building boat storages all the time. It's a new one that right by where we take our garbage. That's why that is boat storage.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:21:15
Mhm. That's the thing that they're-- I've, because every time I come by, it's--

Heber Guthrie 1:21:20
Yeah, they're putting a roof on it, the framing, and that's, that's Boat Storage. And Steve McGee got, he's got all that area that he started with one building, and I'm sure it filled up in and the next one filled up and the next one filled up. You know what I mean. So anyway, I, it's got to do, some point, it's got to come to a halt. The other problem is no sewer system over there. Well, there is, but not like I, there is, but I don't know how that's working out. You know, up to the West End by the store, well his pipe run down here, I've heard, I think they got lines you could tie into. Everybody's not on. I'll call it city water. Everybody's not on city. A lot of people still have their old punch in the ground. Yeah.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:22:08
Mm, hmm.

Heber Guthrie 1:22:09
And I've heard that's like $15,000 to tie into the water system, you know. So if you're social security, you're just hanging on, you're not, some of the things, you're just not, you just can't do it, you know. But the problem was, the owner sold these properties to, you know, outsiders, instead of trying to negotiate with someone, a family, who'd you want to live here. I mean, stuff like that, you know,

Anna Marie Switzer 1:22:38
When thinking that there's like, there's less of the younger generation here, how do you hope that they will stay connected to the Down East culture?

Heber Guthrie 1:22:49
I know when she has that first meeting we have in June, the science, the Science Academy thing, what you call? Yeah, anyway, well, Karen, everybody said, Yep, we want you all go off the school. We want you to be educated, but we want you to come back here and work. You know, find something in the county. We gotta a good Marine Lab, right into Morehead City. A lot of work. I didn't know. A lot of our kids got jobs are and different things that we want to do to stay here. It's hard when you say, be a school teacher. Well, it's, you know, yeah. Well, they make 40, 50,000 It's not much. It ain't a hundred. Well, you got Cherry Point. Cherry Point has done a lot of hauling in here lately, and a lot of boys just got there that way. Any type of, I'll say four year degree, you know what I mean. So that's good, because they'll stay here. You know, you know lot of them ones who love to fish and hunt and stuff. They love it. They're going to do what they can to stay, to stay right here. You know, not leave. Cause a lot, because you off the school to Raleigh, whatever the occupation they want to be. Guess where it's at. It's in Raleigh. I mean, he wants to be a computer engineer or something. He's going to be up there. We don't have that in Harkers Island or in Carteret County. We're, we're probably about 80% tourism right now, 75 anyway. Wouldn't you think? Atlantic Beach?

Anna Marie Switzer 1:24:22
Yeah.

Heber Guthrie 1:24:23
Beaufort? We're all about tourism now. We don't have big industry, which the ones we used to have was fishing, the menhaden, you know what I mean, if you want to call it that. So all we got is public school, rescue, you know, fire department and police department, you know, is good jobs and Cherry Point. There's always, you've always got count on Cherry Point. Even Craven County and Pamlico County, is Cherry Point people. I knew some guy working in Lenoir County, Kinston, drove from Kinston every day, All the way up to the Lenoir. Mm, hmm. Did work to the base. Yeah, I knew man was in two carpools. He left Kinston and got maneuvered and he got another car \pool and come to work, yep, two carpools get Cherry Point. Yeah, yeah. We hope they stay. Well, my son, he works for the base, but he lives in Morehead, you know. So there you go. And we're kind of, we're kind of far away, like from Walmart and all those doctors, especially, we're a while way from doctors' offices, you know what I mean. Beaufort is a, you know, good little drive now. Now, many, many years ago, doctor, Governor, what's his name? He want to put. He promised us he's going to put a bridge from Harkers point to Lenoxville. That's from here to Lenoxville in Beaufort. What's his name? Anyway, we all fell, we all fell for it. We all fell for it. And then said, No, he could keep a bridge. But wonder what would've done to Harkers Island. It may already been gone, Yeah, to have a direct highway right here, quick. You know what I mean?

Anna Marie Switzer 1:25:02
That's a good way. That's kind of what Morehead City has, right?

Heber Guthrie 1:26:16
Yeah, yeah, yeah, if you'll notice, Morehead, Morehead is going to Newport. They're development is going to be part of Newport where they're going,

Anna Marie Switzer 1:26:26
Mm hmm.

Heber Guthrie 1:26:27
And even on 24, that's going right on to, to Cape Carteret, you don't know, you don't know when you get out it's gonna turn into uh, you know what I mean, you're driving along. There's big houses. Here's more one stop light. Well, you just went through whatever little town is you don't know no more. You don't know no more.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:26:48
To kind of pivot a little bit. We, we have a couple, a couple other interns are kind of talking about a little bit like the environment and stuff like that with Cape Lookout. Have you seen any environmental change, like, just over your time in recent years?

Heber Guthrie 1:27:07
What you mean, like, being cleaner or…?

Anna Marie Switzer 1:27:11
I think even, like you were talking about how, like the beach project, that's what it was like when you could remember growing up like, with things like that. Like, have you noticed, like, the shores changing at all? Or…?

Heber Guthrie 1:27:24
Oh, yeah, especially, especially on the side beach, we call it, during the war, they have what called guns over there. Just past the Coast Guard station at the army manned them, they were the third row in sand dunes. They're in the ocean now. And that started in 1980, the surf got to them, and finally they toppled over. And now they're probably from far from here. Shoot, from here to the back of the building in the ocean. The jetty, what we call the rock jetty. The rock jetty was put there to build up land on this side. Well, it's done that. That problem is took it away from this side. So if you look behind you, there's a big old curve in it, and you get your tire and it comes over here. So what we call the spit, the end here, that's getting longer, but it's coming out of it's coming out of this part. I noticed firsthand Hurricane Teddy had been three years ago, maybe four. Hurricane Teddy come out there, and did come, didn't make land fall, just sat off the coast here couple days. Well, here we are, that nor'easter day and night, day and night, about three days, and we go back to the Cape, we start our tour. And I said, Well, look at this shoal right here. Has that storm done that? What happened, it started a little thing or shoal and left. It left cape, it left Cape Point. and it curves out, and now it's connected with Shark Island out there, which is a long ways off, yeah. Well, as time goes on, it's got shoals got higher, so now low low tide, you can walk, you can leave Cape Lookout, and you can walk to Shark Island. I've seen that happen myself, that point, that point has got that much longer. Yeah, and right now, I bet you, I bet you, the Shark Island is as close as this room right here. They swim across it. They swim over there.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:29:34
Do you remember, like the shores changing that much when you were younger? Or is that a newer thing?

Heber Guthrie 1:29:43

I believe they have. They put breakwaters along front of Harkers Island. Years ago, I was 10 years already, they did that same thing, and it did basically the same thing. It kind of did this, but it got more over here. Back then, it was scallop houses. They opened scallops, and the shell just went through a chute right in the water. And for some reason, them shells came this way. So after years and years, all that bottom was covered with them scallop shells. And that might have been a good thing. It might have held that sand, you know. But I noticed where the place my brother sold, like two year ago they finally had to put—well there's big boulders in front whether they were losing property right here. Shell Point would have done been gone if they hadn't done that out there. You know what I mean? It'd've got it, it'd've got it. It'd got in that parking lot and washing away. So, yeah, I've seen a lot in my years, changes, but that Cape Lookout out to me is probably the most dramatic in the shortest amount of time, in just three or four years, and low tide, I can stand to a spot. I can tell the people we see, you know, if you look, if you'll imagine straight line that light house, I said, all that sand on that side has come there in three years. And we don't bring sand over here. We don't have a contractor. You don't see a bulldozer right here, night and day, pushing sand around. It's just, it's just done it. And it seems like once that motion begins, it's hard for it to, you know what I mean. When's it going to stop? Where's the limit? What's it, what's it finally going to do? And right now, I believe, in a couple years, it'll connect with Shark Island, and a storm might help it, and a storm might destroy it, might put it back like it was. You don't know. You don't know.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:31:49
Is there, have you seen anybody in the community like working to maintain the shoreline? Is that something that you've seen, or is it…?

Heber Guthrie 1:31:59
You mean, like a personal?

Anna Marie Switzer 1:32:01
Just kind of any like community response to these, these changes.

Heber Guthrie 1:32:06
Well, you wouldn't out there.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:32:09
Yeah, I guess that's the national.

Heber Guthrie 1:32:10
It'd be too big out there. Well, I know people that's got waterfront here, where I was raised that had to do the same thing, put rocks and stuff out front to hold it, you know, to hold their property back because, because Imma show you a picture and [cough] just as dry as I can be. Now, when a boy got this to me, I said, no wonder why I could this was my grandmother's house.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:32:49
Oh, wow.

Heber Guthrie 1:32:50
That is you're standing to the edge of the water looking back north. All right, well, all them trees is gone. That house is gone, I believe Hurricane Hazel. But anyway, my mom told me the tide got so high that dad, he had a boat, and he kept pulling her up on the shores. The tide came in. He said he finally tied her porch.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:33:21
Oh my goodness.

Heber Guthrie 1:33:23
He tied that boat to that porch before that storm, in that one storm. The only reference, the only, when I look at this and look at that place now that's where the shop was, is built, okay, talking about, uh huh. The only reference that I will have is right here was a fig tree right beside that house, and that fig tree is still there. That's the only way. When I look at this and look at that fig tree, I said, well, that house is over there. Uh, anyway, that that was her home.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:33:57
Wow, even just like the trees.

Heber Guthrie 1:33:59
And their story was, Dad always said they some of these, some of the when they built houses over here from when they left. He said some of the lumber did came from the original houses [on Shackleford]. They floated it over here, yeah, and put in a new house.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:34:15
Are those the shells? Yes.

Heber Guthrie 1:34:15
Some oysters and clams that they would open.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:34:15
Interesting.

Heber Guthrie 1:34:15
You know what they could… Yeah, you know. But it has cedar shingles, it's the shingles, for the roof, was cedars, cedar shakes. And mom used to tell me some winters. They could look up sleeping upstairs. They could look up and move their head. And sometimes they could see the moon. Could see the moon. See the moon. I said, Mama. She said, Let me tell you, we weren't hot either. I said, [laugh] She said you can see the moon to the roof. But anyway, yeah, that that's, that's, if you walk past that house down the shoreline. that's a net spread And right here is shell.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:34:47
yeah, that's a good mountain of shells, for sure.

Heber Guthrie 1:35:05
Yep. And we would throw them shells there, you know how shell look, yeah? And day like that, real windy. We would throw them up in the wind, and it would get so high, and then it would come back, like a boomerang,

Anna Marie Switzer 1:35:17
Like a boomerang.

Heber Guthrie 1:35:18
And then we had a run, because we didn't know where, we had to get in that house to see if they would hit us.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:35:24
And don't want to get hit by those

Heber Guthrie 1:35:25
No, and anyway. And that new trees there that's oak. They're gone. Them big oak trees going—the problem I see with the front of the island, because people are clearing so much property and trees, if we have a bad storm, there's no buffer there anymore. You know I mean, back then, them people, them people, they didn't build up on the water. They built behind. you know what I mean, 'cause they knew from over here what that wind, that water could do. They didn't build on the waterfront. They were always back ways, like her house, back, not to the water, and they left them trees to hold, to hold the wind. You know.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:36:04
Because these trees over here, I was walking by them, they, a lot of them are like, what they call the ghost forest.

Heber Guthrie 1:36:11
Yeah.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:36:12
And do you like, have you seen that be? Do you think it's from, like, the sea level rise, or is that from, like, building not protecting those trees?

Heber Guthrie 1:36:21
Yeah, not protecting them, yeah, and the water. There's a lot of places that's on Browns Island. I used to go flaggering, and we'd be shoveling on, and there might be a step, from the bottom, yeah, three foot water. I said, well, that had to be a tree at one time. Has that island? Yeah, that island is going that much. Did you, it left it? You know, went over it here, you know, down here, I mentioned the cemetery. There's a big, I like to say, probably the largest oak in the county. Probably not, but it's pretty big. I know the lower limb is like 80 feet… The lower limb, well, that's in the water now. And that used to be like, I won't say a sign, but like a marker when you saw that big oak, you knew the cemeteries right behind it. But that's how much Shackleford Banks is eroding away on this side, you know. And I mean, we might be getting more nor'easters than we used to. Because, you

know, Bird Island, which is the new Bird Island, with the sand that got washed away with storms. It was not as big as this one, but it was half that size. And there was a storm coming along. Get the tide high in that nor'easter and it just takes that sand away.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:37:45
Can you think of anything like, like, how would you think that like the community or the government could react to those changes? Like, do you do you think of, or have you heard any ways that, like we can stop all of this, or at least mitigate?

Heber Guthrie 1:38:05
Well, what they did here the breakwater, they call that the living shore, or something is what they call that.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:38:12
I don't know what they call it.

Heber Guthrie 1:38:14
That was mentioned about to go to the Cape. I heard Jeff or somebody say, Well, we could do everybody, yeah, but then the boaters can't anchor here. Here's these big rocks, in the way, can you see. You know, things could be done. But there again, you got to say, well, who's in the best interest? What's going to happen if I do this? How they going to feel over here?

Anna Marie Switzer 1:38:34
Give and take.

Heber Guthrie 1:38:35
Yep, yep, yep. Now, what's that guy's name? Charles Davis. He passed away this year. He wrote a book, and I don't have a copy, about this thick about Harkers Island. It might be a copy here anyway. I believe, seeing that book, I think was back in the '30s, the Corps of Engineers suggested that they put a rock jetty right down the front of Harkers Island, you know what I mean. Not known on shore, out in the water far enough you could come through it a little inlet, and then have you boat behind it. And nobody, I guess nobody wanted it. But that would be a big help right now. You know what I mean, especially storms. Well, that will stop them waves from getting to your property. It wouldn't be very pretty, that's the thing. You wouldn't be very pretty out there, but you would have your place. So I don't know. I don't know. It's just, and it's everywhere. You know people, well, we like that. We know that'll save it, but it's going to look bad. Well, you've got to make a choice too. And I hear Jeff all time 'bout the Cape. You know, we've got this much money. Who's, what wheel is the squeaking the worst, you know what I mean, where do we? Where do we put that 400,000 you know, 'cause a lot of folks want a lifesaving station to be restored, and barn, the Barden house, which was the 1907 keepers quarter, the two story highs. You can see it from here, lot of people wants that restored. Well, yeah, but that's money, you know, and labor ain't cheap no more. And over there, think about, yeah, like the board wall, that was a job to build that boardwalk this past winter. I thought.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:40:32

Is that that boardwalk new?

Heber Guthrie 1:40:34
Mhm.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:40:35
Oh, I didn't know that.

Heber Guthrie 1:40:35
Yeah, that's new. But, like, he's saying, do you put wood back? I know it's cooler, but in time, them nails is going to draw out of it. It's going to get splinters in it, and here we are. Why have we done it? Or do we put something supposed to last 25 or longer? I tell everybody, 400 years. That should last 400 years. That stuff right there, at least 400 years, you know, and or do you go that route? And then you got more money. Budget comes along. Well, this is fixed for good. We don't have to worry about the boardwalk for a long time. I think that's what they want to do to the lighthouse, I think make all these repairs now, get them all done. Staircase, paint, top everything, and give us the keys. You said, enjoy it 50 years, don't you'll worry about 50 years. Enjoy your lighthouse. You know what I mean,

Anna Marie Switzer 1:40:35
Yeah.

Heber Guthrie 1:40:38
Because ferry boys that took a lot, that… Boy, that was a lot of income for us, knowing you could go over and climb the lighthouse. In 2019, it was open, and Sunday, we had 300 people just to climb the lighthouse. See, once you get them over there, there's the shovel we do. There's a store we have now, they're going to spend money, they're going to spend money, and it's going to get around, you know what I mean.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:41:59
Would you want Down East, and I guess this is specifically Harkers Island, but like to kind of, like, lean into that tourism industry? Or what is that something that you see?

Heber Guthrie 1:42:12
They get into it down here? Yeah, they gonna have to. I know boys do tours, eco tours now they do little charters, little fishing charters. Well, Sunday, middle day, they take them to the light house. You know what I mean, they always got customers, you know. So, yeah, they going to have to do it. I think if I had my cab license, I think I would enjoy something like that. And I mean, because you got, you know, you got to be, you know, you can't just want to do it when you carry passengers, You got to be, you know, legal, you know. But I know boys does fishing trips, and they don't go in the ocean. It's just locally, they busy all the time, busy all the time. And you show up, you don't have to have a rod and reel, nothing, just, just your card. Just give me credit. Just give me a debit card. I'll take care of you. Go have good time. Yeah, go home. You're done, yeah. The biggest thing for us was those rentals he had, I think he had six or eight the first year. I mean, everybody went wild over them rentals. You know what I mean, we couldn't keep them. We, they were out every day. I bet you had 20 and

they'd be out every day. Because now that I think about it, you can go over there, get in a vehicle, and you can ride to Cape Point. You go in the village, you can stop, you can teach, come in hand. You the keys, you're done. She's not yours. You ain't got to maintain her. You ain't got fuel in her. You've had a good day. Boom.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:43:44
And it's longer than it looks.

Heber Guthrie 1:43:46
It is, but.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:43:48
It's a lot bigger.

Heber Guthrie 1:43:48
People get out there, they don't realize how much space it is out there, you know, I tell them, I said, Look, when you look on the map, yeah, Cape Point's about that far from the lighthouse on the map. You get here is three miles. You can't see to the end of it.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:44:05
Three miles in the sand.

Heber Guthrie 1:44:08
I tell them to come out on the beach. I said, we're already we're already past the curve of the earth. I said, you can see that truck out there, but you can't see the shoreline. The Earth is already curved that much. You're looking at it. You're witnessing, the earth disappeared out there. You're that far away. You know that? Yeah, I can see, I can see being a more tourism. I don't know why we don't have motels. I mean, I grew up, course, motel there, uh, down there was one called Grayson's. He had one laid home. And then it was one when I bought fish, which that got damaged in the storm last spring. And then it was one called coaches to the other end. And I think it was a little place on the back road. Maybe she rented it out places. But I mean, back then we have and other. Get Harker's Fishing was right there. But you have four major motels here, well what happened over time, people bought property. See, they bought property. They built them a condo, and they got a little time sharing done. Might be three families own that place, and they got a week of the year to come down. That's a lot of thing happen. They keep your boat in storage. Come here, launch or go. But a lot of our customers, I say where you're staying? Are you staying? Oh, Emerald Isle, Emerald Isle is where they're staying. And they got a house. You know what I mean, they're renting a house. And especially, if you've got a family, you've got a kitchen, you know, and it's probably, it's probably a couple $100 a day when you think the house, I would, I would think $1,000 a week to rent a house,

Anna Marie Switzer 1:45:54
Probably more.

Heber Guthrie 1:45:55

Yeah, I would, I would, and somebody like to do that around here. I mean, it's working out there, you know. So I don't know, but boat building is not what it was, No way. I mean, that's, that's, that's pretty much gone 'round here, you know. And you got Jarrett Bay, you know. But he don't have, no he don't have no competition, uh, no more 'round here. Shoot, when I was coming up to about six major boat houses on the is—I mean, they had 15-20, people hard, you can get a job easy. You know what I mean, if you didn't want to go to college. Go work, go work in a boat house. Like, I said, that stuff, acetone, go work in the boat house and dial the acetone crazy thing.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:46:51
Well, as we're to the end of…

Heber Guthrie 1:46:55
'Course fishing, fishing is hurt too because of regulations. You know, my friend, he don't shrimp. He used to, but he buys food, now seafood. And he told me, he said, some my buddies caught, like 2500 pound shrimp. And he called the fish market, and they said, We don't want them. We can't we don't want them. And finally, they sold them for 60 cent a pound. That's ridiculous. When I grew up, shrimp was always $2 or more pound. I don't see how the—and what's hurting is, uh, foreigner. There's foreign shrimp is coming in here. Most of the restaurants are not local seafood. Yeah, them shrimp that you get to San Tara? They're everyone the same size. It's almost like they're stamped out or something. Ain't it? Everyone the same exact size. They come from a farm, so I don't know where it's going. Yeah, I really do wish that the kids would stay here, you know, and stay around here and raise. It's a good place to raise kids, I think. I mean, we don't have a big, big crime problem here for the most part, you know. So anyway, but we do like industry, we do like stuff to hold them here, except for the base, Cherry Point right now is being a godsend for us. I mean, when I was there, there was a lot of house, there's a lot of car payments made and house payments made from that base hour, and kids put through school because of that base there. But being it's been there since the ‘40s. That's 60 years, 80 years, almost 70 years.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:48:45
80 years.

Heber Guthrie 1:48:46
Yeah, almost 80 years, has been there almost.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:48:49
I guess.

Heber Guthrie 1:48:50
And the day I went there, you know what they told me, this place is gonna close. Why in the world you come here to work every day? What in the world you come here for? Don't you know they're going to close this place? I said, close the place? What do you mean? They're building a brand new tower. And they really did. I said they're building a brand new control tower. Your channel is going to close. Ain't no other place with an East Coast like this. It's not, there's not, you think about it. We used to hear when they when the space, when they had the shuttle program, space shuttle, it was true. I believe, because we got, we had a runway, three two was the longest runways, almost 8000 feet long. And the way the runways are made, there is a T that they're offset.

In other words, when you come here, if you can get over here, you got another runway. Goes another 7000 feet. When they when they launched a shuttle program, Cherry Point went on alert in case they had to abort that mission, that shuttle could land on that three two runway. I remember one day, it was in the daytime, and sure enough, the fire department, I said, boy's, where's that fire department going? They went to the tower and sat there. I said, darn thing, waiting for that shuttle to go by, they're on alert. It's the truth. Yeah, I say it is the truth. They're sitting down. They're waiting in case something happens. They can run out there and, you know, yeah, yeah, yeah, that I didn't see that place anyway. Well, ma'am. I've never experienced nothing like this before this. This has been a knock down. You ought to be Larry King and I could—It's like doing a Larry King live. Well, all we lack is that big old speaker, with that round thing around it

Anna Marie Switzer 1:49:38
You know, I'll be back next summer. I can, I'll bring one of those.

Heber Guthrie 1:50:46
Bring one of those, yeah.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:50:48
Yeah, well, I, I'm so grateful. I feel like I've learned so much.

Heber Guthrie 1:50:53
Well, ma'am, I hope you have. I don't know what I said, if you use anything, but that's just, you know, just me.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:51:00
Truly.

Heber Guthrie 1:51:01
Somebody might have a totally different story. I hope they do.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:51:04
Well, that's, that's what, how you write history.

Heber Guthrie 1:51:05
That's what I like about the Cape lighthouse story. I say, I know, I know this happened on this date, but if you talk to him and her and her, they got a different story. What happened that day? I had a friend of mine working with Jerry, and one day we grew up together, and I got on the boat one day. He said, Did you do a tour? I said, Yeah, we went to the lighthouse. He said, Did you tell him 'bout that man falling inside of it, and they couldn't get him. I said, I can't tell the public that. He said, I can't tell the public stories like that. Is it true? He said, Granddad always said, well, and I got thinking, his name is James. You know what it could very well be, because there is a cavity between the walls. We say nine foot thick. Well, as you go up, is a cavity there. You know what I mean, I said, well, they could have been halfway up and, yeah, you wouldn't got him that you, you had to know exactly where it was to bust through it, so you never know. Yeah, I tell myself, I can't tell that stuff like that. But see the I had never heard that, but his, some of his generation had told that about lighthouse.

Anna Marie Switzer 1:52:21
Well, do you think that there's anything that we haven't covered yet that you would want to share?

Heber Guthrie 1:52:30
Well, I reckon I'd share the… There's a whole lot like, like, when you look at the tombstone, they have you, you have your birthday and your death day, though, and had that little slice there. There's a lot happening. There's a lot to happen. That little line, if you think about it, yeah, somebody's life, you know, you know, all kinds of things. No, I've been fortunate. I haven't had to leave here. You know what I mean, I've always lived here. My parents, of course, passed away. My brother, I lost my brother and sister two years before my wife died. So that was three, my brother-in-law—well I was real close to him, he died about two years ago. He was from Davis. He had a lot, he had a lot of stories was in the air force during the Korean War. So, you know, he had, he had some stories. I mean, he, he would have… it was funny. He was funny now. But you know, when you're in it. It was, it was not very pleasant. Now, my father-in-law, I tell you a story about World War Two. He was on, he was on a merchant, a merchant ship, and they had kerosene had been to Aruba. Lot of our fuel came from Aruba, well they had to come right by here to go up north to refine it. Well, he worked for, it was SO, so they didn't have no weapons, no kind of guns. And two days, they didn't kind of go, he was about they might have went 100 miles a day, very slow shift. Two days out of Aruba, a submarine came up behind them and start shelling their ship. And so, got so bad, the captain finally said, Hey, abandon ship. Well, he was an oiler, so he was down below the water line, and where the engine room, uh, about 20 crew so they all got out of it. They all jumped overboard. Sure did, down the ocean. And I said, Well, did the sub? He said that sub had no chances of killing us. He said all they wanted was that ship, to sink on the bottom, and they kept shelling her 'til. Finally, they got, he said they never used torpedoes. They just shelled her, you know, holes the side of her finally. And finally she went down. And he said, We were out there that night and next morning, the Navy, you know, they find out we're, you know, distressed, and they got us ashore and gone all back New York. But I mean, he, and he, that's 'bout the only story, he'd tell about stuff like that went on during the war. Uh, but, uh, yeah, I can't imagine stuff like that, but, uh, that people went through and a lot of people, when you talking about the opportunity, a lot of people left even Harkers Island on and went to Norfolk during the war for jobs, plenty of jobs, especially in building construction. They built ships, built wood ships, you know, we had a lot of people. He, his brothers, did they? They all when they got up in age, you know, and they come down and be I said, where you all live, Norfolk, where you all live, Hampton, where you all live, I said, y'all right now, he said, we moved there. We left Beaufort. They lived in Beaufort. We left out during the war. We raised our family there. We made good money there, you know, so they had, they left, you know, there's a group that left here and went to, it was down to Florida, right under, right under Tampa. Oh, what's the name of that town? Anyway, fisherman from Salter Path and Warhead and settled and became their own little town. What's the name of that place? It's got a Spanish name. It's got a Spanish name. Anyway, well, right now, that's completely true. It's just, you know, no nothing. And mostly what they caught was mullets with jumping mullets. I read over here in the mid 1500s, Cape Lookout had the top harvest of mullets one year in pounds, more than anybody on the East Coast right here at Cape lookout, caught more mullets than any other place, right there. All right, we done?

Anna Marie Switzer 1:56:55
Well, thank you so much.

Heber Guthrie 1:56:57
You're welcome.